Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 10204 01 OF 02 092249Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
----------019479 092254Z /62
O 092003Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4786
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PAIRS IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 10204

EXDIS - DIST AS NODIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PBOR, MOPS, MILI, SY, LE, IS
SUBJECT: LEBANON: DISCUSSION AUGUST 9 WITH BEGIN, YADIN, DAYAN AND WEIZMAN

1. SUMMARY AND COMMENT: THIS MEETING GENERATED BY QUANDT VISIT WAS A CULMINATION OF THE EXCHANGES WE HAVE BEEN HAVING WITH THE GOI HERE DURING THE PAST MONTH AND A HALF. THE MINISTERS HAD JUST COME FROM CABINET DELIBERATIONS ON LEBANON. THE SENSE OF FRUSTRATION AND BITTERNESS ON THEIR PART ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING IN BEIRUT WAS EVIDENT THROUGHOUT OUR DISCUSSION AS WAS ISRAELI BELIEF THAT WASHINGTON WAS POWERLESS TO RESTRAIN THE SYRIANS. THE ISRAELIS FEAR THAT WE ARE IMPOTENT IN THIS SITUATION (THERE WAS MOSTALGIC TALK ABOUT THE MARINES IN LEBANON IN 58), AND KNOW THAT THEY ARE NOT. THEY REALIZE FULL WELL THE BROADER CONSEQUENCES OF AN ISRAELI MILITARY INTERVENTION
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 TEL AV 10204 01 OF 02 092249Z

IN LEBANON AND WILL DO EVERYTHING THEY CAN, SHORT OF SACRIFICING THE CHRISTIANS, TO AVOID IT. BUT THEY WILL NOT WAIT FOREVER TO SEE THE FRUITS OF OUR DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS, NOT WHILE THEIR CHRISTIANS FRIENDS ARE DYING EVERY NIGHT IN BEIRUT. WE SENSED THEY WERE GETTING UNCOMFORTABLY CLOSE TO SOME POINT OF DECISION. END SUMMARY AND COMMENT

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

2. AFTER BRIEFING BEGIN, YADIN, DAYAN AND WEIZMAN AUGUST 9
ON SECRETARY'S TALKS IN ALEXANDRIA ON PEACE PROCESS, BILL QUANDT
BROUGHT UP SUBJECT OF LEBANON. ALSO PRESENT WERE RUBINSTEIN,
TEHILA, PATTIR AND BLACKWILL. QUANDT SAID SECRETARY
WAS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT SITUATION IN LEBANON AND
SADAT HAD EXPRESSED HIS WORRY AS WELL. SADAT FEARED LEBANON
COULD EXPLODE AND ENDANGER PEACE PROCESS. HE HAD URGED
RESTRAINT ON CHRISTIANS ELEMENTS, BUT FELT HE HAD LITTLE
INFLUENCE ON THE PARTIES DIRECTLY INVOLVED.

3. QUANDT THEN SAID THAT U.S. WAS CONSIDERING INFORMAL IDEA
BY A LEBANESE OFFICIAL BY WHICH THERE WOULD BE AN EARLY
MEETING OF ADF CONTRIBUTING STATES. PURPOSE WOULD BE TO
SEE IF IT WAS POSSIBLE TO PUT ADDITIONAL NON-SYRIAN ARAB
FORCES INTO THE BEIRUT AREA AS A BUFFER BETWEEN THE CHRISTIANS
AND SYRIANS. ANOTHER IDEA WAS FOR THE UNSYG TO SEND A SPECIAL
REPRESENTATIVE ON A FACT-FINDING MISSION TO LEBANON
WHICH MIGHT HAVE SOME CALMING EFFECT. THE POSSIBILITIES
WERE INDICATIVE OF OUR EFFORTS TO THINK OF WAY TO DEFUSE HIGHLY
DANGEROUS SITUATION IN BEIRUT.

4. QUANDT SAID THE SECRETARY WANTED TO STRESS TO THE PRIME MINISTER
THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT BOTH SIDES, THE CHRISTIANS AND
THE SYRIANS AVOID PROVOCATION. IN THAT
SPIRIT, THE SECRETARY ASKED THE GOI AGAIN FOR RESTRAINT
HE WOULD APPRECIATE ANYTHING ISRAELIS COULD DO
SECRET

SECRET

TO LOWER THE TEMPERATURE IN BEIRUT. QUANDT WENT
ON THAT THE SECRETARY ALSO BELIEVES THAT IT
IS IMPORTANT FOR SARKIS' CREDIBILITY TO GET THE LAF BATTALION
DEPLOYED IN THE SOUTH. IF BEIRUT EXPLODED, OR THERE
WAS A DISASTER IN THE SOUTH BETWEEN NOW AND THE CAMP DAVID
TALKS, IT COULD GET IN THE WAY OF THE CRITICAL DELIBERATIONS
WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 5.

5. THESE REMARKS BY QUANDT LED TO EXTENDED AND OMINOUS DISCUSSION ON
LEBANON DURING WHICH ISRAELIS MADE IT CLEAR THAT IF CHRISTIAN
COMMUNITY IS IN DANGER OF BEING DESTROYED, NO ONE,
ESPECIALLY THE U.S., SHOULD EXPECT ISRAEL TO STAND ASIDE.
WEIZMAN SAID THAT ALL PARTIES SHOULD MAKE SURE THAT NOTHING
EXPLODES IN LEBANON BETWEEN NOW AND SEPTEMBER 5. MOST
IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE WAS TO SEPARATE THE SYRIANS AND THE
CHRISTIANS IN BEIRUT. IT WAS NOW IRRELEVANT WHO HAD FIRST
STARTED THE SHOOTING. WHAT SEEMED TO BE CLEAR WAS THAT UNTIL
OPPOSING FORCES WERE SEPARATED, FIRING WOULD CONTINUE.
WEIZMAN NOTED THAT IN PAST FEW DAYS, GOI HAD DISCOURAGED
CHRISTIAN PROVOCATION, AND BEGIN ADDED "YES INDEED." BEGIN
ADDED THAT IN RESPONSE TO AMBASSADOR'S URGING YESTERDAY THE GOI HAD
SENT A MESSAGE TO THE CHRISTIANS IN BEIRUT URGING THEM TO

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

CEASE PROVOCATIVE ACTS.

6. YADIN NEXT INTERVENED TO SAY THAT VERY FACT OF SEPTEMBER 5 MEETING COULD LEAD SYRIANS TO ACT IN BEIRUT IN A WAY WHICH COULD JEOPARDIZE CAMP DAVID DISCUSSIONS. AFTER ALL, SYRIA DID NOT WANT THOSE CAMP DAVID TALKS TO SUCCEED, AND MIGHT START "BIG BUSINESS" IN BEIRUT TO RUIN THE ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH THE SUMMIT WOULD TAKE PLACE.

7. DAYAN THEN MADE LONG AND EMOTIONAL INTERVENTION. HE SAID THAT IT WAS A LONG TIME FROM AUGUST 9 TO SEPTEMBER 5. ON ONE SIDE WAS SYRIAN REGULAR TROOPS, ON THE OTHER CIVILIANS, "NO MATTER WHAT THEY DO," WITH THEIR FAMILIES. ALL THOSE WHO HAVE INFLUENCE IN THIS SITUATION HAVE IT WITH THE CHRISTIANS--

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 TEL AV 10204 01 OF 02 092249Z

FRANCE, ISRAEL, THE UN AND THE U.S. NOBODY INFLUENCES THE SYRIANS. THE AMBASSADOR RESPONDED THAT WE ARE WORKING ON THE SAUDIS TO RESTRAIN THE SYRIANS, BUT DAYAN DISMISSED THAT EFFORT AND RETURNED TO HIS THEME. HE SAID "CHRISTIANS ARE BEING KILLED. ISRAEL HAS BEEN PROMISING THEM TO STAND BY THEIR SIDE. WE ARE DOING NOTHING. WE SIMPLY SEND MESSAGES. WHAT THE HELL DO THE SYRIANS HAVE TO BE THERE FOR? TWO-THIRDS OF THE CHRISTIANS HAVE LEFT. THE ONLY SYRIAN PURPOSE NOW IS TO KILL THE REMAINDER. IF ISRAL'S POLICY IS TO SEE NO BLOW-UP BEFORE SEPTEMBER 5 AND WE ARE EXPECTED TO SUPPRESS CHRISTIAN RESISTANCE, THEN I WILL NOT BE PART OF IT."

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 10204 02 OF 02 092229Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
---------- 019307 092235Z /62
O 092003Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4787
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PAIRS IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 TEL AVIV 10204

EXDIS - DIST AS NODIS

QM AMBASSADOR RESPONDED THAT KEEPING THINGS IN BEIRUT
QUIET WAS A NECESSARY BUT NOT SUFFIEIENT ELEMENT IN MEETING
THE PROBLEM. THE IDEA WAS TO REPLACE SYRIANS TROOPS WITH
OTHER ARAB TROOPS AT FLASH POINTS AND THUS ALLOW THE
SYRIANS TO PULL BACK. WEIZMAN INTERJECTED THE QUESTION
"WHY CAN WE NOT HAVE A CEASEFIRE," AND THE AMBASSADOR RESPONDED
THAT THAT WAS PRECISELY OUR OBJECTIVE. IF
WE GOT THE SHOOTING STOPPED, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO SLOWLY
ALTER THINGS ON THE GROUND, AND ARRANGE A SEPARATION OF FORCES.

9. DAYAN THEN ARGUED THAT THEY ONLY TROOPS THAT COULD REALLY
MAKE AN EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTION IN BEIRUT WERE WESTERN --
FRENCH AND OHTERS. SAUDI AND SUDANESE SOLDIERS WOULD STAND
BY AND DO NOTHING, INDEED WOULD COOPERATE WITH THE SYRIANS
AND THE PALESTINIANS AS THEY MOVED TO DESTROY THE CHRISTIANS.
HE AGAIN ASKED, "WHY CANNOT THE SYRIANS LEAVE."
THESE REMARKS LED BEGIN TO ASK WHY UNIFIL UNITS
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 TEL AV 10204 02 OF 02 092229Z

COULD NOT MOVE INTO BEIRUT AND THE AMBASSADOR TOLD HIM IN
FAMILIAR TERMS.

10. WEIZMAN THEN ASKED WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN BEIRUT WITH
RESPECT TO THE MOVEMENT OF THE LEBANESE COMPANY
BY HELICOPTER TO TIBNIN. THE AMBASSADOR SAID THAT THE LEBANESE
GOVERNMENT WAS STILL CONSIDERING THE MATTER. WEIZMAN STRESSED
THAT IF THE GOL WOULD AGREE TO THE DEAL, THE ISRAELIS WILL
DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO ASSURE THAT THE HELICOPTERS GET
SAFELY FROM KAWKABA TO TIBNIN. ALL THAT IS NEEDED, WEIZMAN SAID,
WAS AGREEMENT IN BEIRUT. AMBASSADOR SAID U.S. HOPED MOVEMENT OF LAF
TO TIBNIN WOULD HELP SITUATION IN BEIRUT. WEIZMAN DOUBTED IT.

11. WEIZMAN THEN RETURNED TO THE THEME THAT SYRIANS AND
THE PLO HAVE NO INTEREST IN SUCCESS OF SEPTEMBER 5 MEETING.
HE SAID THAT THEY MAY WELL DO SOMETHING WE HAVE NOT THOUGHT
OF. THEREFORE, HE HAD GIVEN INSTRUCTIONS OT HIS GENERALS
TO "OPEN OUR EYES WIDELY HERE". INDEED, THE SYRIANS NOW
HAD A NEW INTEREST, AFTER THE PRESIDENT'S INITIATIVE
TO INCREASE SHELLING IN BEIRUT. WEIZMAN CONTINUED

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

THAT, SPEAKING BLUNTLY, HE HAD TO SAY THAT FOR A LONG TIME
THE U.S. HAD WANTED THE SYRAINS TO SUCCEED IN PACIFYING LEBANON.
WASHINGTON HAD BEEN GIVING SILENT SUPPORT TO THE SYRIAN
EFFORT. IT COULD BE THAT THE SYRIANS WERE LIVING UNDER
THE IMPRESSION THAT THE U.S. WOULD NOT MIND IF SYRIANS
SUCCEEDED IN THEIR MISSION TO UNIFY LEBANON AT THE EXPENSE
OF THE MARONITE COMMUNITY.

12. THE AMBASSADOR RESPONDED THAT THE SYRIANS ARE UNDER
NO DOUBT THAT THE U.S. DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT FIRING ON THE
CHRISTIANS IN BEIRUT IS WISE OR JUSTIFIED. BUT AT THE SAME TIME,
THE SYRIANS COULD NOT NOW BE FORCED TO DEPART. THE GOL HAD
INVITED THE SYRIANS IN AND DID NOT WANT THEM TO
SECRET

SECRET

WITHDRAW BECAUSE IT BELIEVED THERE WOULD BE CIVIL WAR
IF THEY DID. UNLESS THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT TAKES A
DIFFERENT VIEW, THE SYRIANS CANNOT BE REQUIRED TO LEAVE.
BUT WE WERE TALKING TODAY, ABOUT A MORE MODEST STEP THAN TOTAL
SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL, THE SEPARATION OF CHRISTIANS AND SYRIAN
FORCES IN BEIRUT. IT WAS TOWARD THAT OBJECTIVE THAT WE
SHOULD BEND OUR IMMEDIATE EFFORTS.

13. WEIZMAN THEN ASKED WHAT WOULD THE U.S. DO IF IT WAS
IN ISRAEL'S PLACE: IF THE CHRISTIAN POPULATION IS
DEFEATED; IF SYRIA CONTORLS LEBANON, INCLUDING BEIRUT.
WHAT DOES THE U.S. THINK ISRAEL SHOULD DO IN SUCH A
CIRCUMSTANCE. GOI INTELLIGNECE ASSESSMENT IS THAT SYRIANS HAVE
TAKEN DECISION TO SUPPRESS THE CHRISTIAN CAPACITY FOR POLITICAL AND
MILITARY RESISTANCE. THE AMBASSADOR ANSWERED THAT ALL OUR
ENERGY WAS DEVOTED TO AVOIDING SUCH A SITUATION, BUT
WEIZMAN SHOT BACK "WE ARE CLOSE TO IT." THE AMBASSADOR
THEN SAID IF THAT WERE TRUE, IT WAS IMPERATIVE THAT ISRAEL
KNOW WHAT WAS HAPPENING ON THE GROUND IN LEBANON, AND NOT
BE MISLED BY ITS FRIENDS THERE. IF ISRAEL WERE FACED WITH
A DREADFUL CHOICE, IT MUST BE SURE IT KNOWS WHAT IS
REALLY OCCURRING BEFORE MAKING FAR-REACHING DECISIONS.

14. DAYAN THEN OBSERVED THAT SEPTEMBER 5 WAS MORE THAN THREE
WEEKS AWAY. HE DID NOT WANT THE U.S. TO BLAME ISRAEL BECAUSE
IT UPSET THE CAMP DAVID TALKS THROUGH ITS ACTIONS IN
BEIRUT. BUT HE ALSO DID NTT WANT TO STAND ASIDE AND WATCH
THE CHRISTIANS DIE. HE SAID THE KILLING OF CIVILIANS
"MADE HIM SICK". IF THE U.S. COULD DO NOTHING TO SEPARATE
THE FORCES, IF SHELLING CONTINUED, ISRAEL WAS APPARENTLY
THE ONLY COUNTRY THAT CARED ABOUT THE CHRISTIANS AND COULD
DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

15. QUANDT RESPONDED THAT WASHINGTON CERTAINLY APPRECIATED
ISRAEL'S CONCERNS. BUT IF THE CONFLICT WERE BROADENED

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

IT WOULD BE TRAGIC FOR LEBANON, FOR THE CHRISTIANS, FOR EVERYBODY.
SECRET

SECRET

QUANDT THEN STRESSED THAT IF THE SITUATION IN BEIRUT BECAME MUCH WORSE AND IF ISRAEL CONTEMPLATED DIRECT ACTION, HE HOPED THE U.S. WOULD BE INFORMED IN ADVANCE.

16. PROMISING NOTHING, DAYAN SAID "GET THE SYRIANS OUT. IT IS NOT THEIR COUNTRY. IT IS NOT THEIR CITY. TELL THE SRYIANS TO WITHDRAW THEIR TROOPS."

17. WEIZMAN THEN SAID THE GOI HAD THE FEELING, "INDEED THE ESTIMATE" THAT SYRIA WAS BEHAVING AS IT WAS IN BEIRUT BECAUSE IT BELIEVED ISRAEL COULD NOT AFFORD TO INTERVENE. THAT MIGHT BE LOGICAL, BUT IT MIGHT NOT BE TRUE. JUST BECAUSE IT HAD ONLY BUZZED BEIRUT THUS FAR DID NOT MEAN ISRAEL WOULD NOT DO MORE. WEIZMAN SAID HE FULLY AGREED WITH DAYAN'S EARLIER REMARKS. YADIN ADDED THAT HE FEARED THAT NOW THAT THE SEPTEMBER 5 MEETING WAS SET, THE SYRIANS WOULD BELIEVE THAT ISRAEL WOULD NOT DARE TO DO ANYTHING WHIH MIGHT RUIN THE SUMMIT. THE SYRIANS COULD WELL BELIEVE THEY HAVE FREEDOM OF ACTION. IF THEY DO THINK SO, THEY ARE WRONG. YADIN SAID, "THE U.S. HAS TO RAISE HELL WITH THEM." THE AMBASSADOR RESPONDED THAT WE WERE DOING EVERYTHING WE COULD THINK OF DIPLOMATICALLY. WE WERE OPEN TO ANY IDEAS THE GOI HAD. BUT WE CERTAINLY HOPED THAT ISRAEL WOULD WEIGH ITS ACTIONS VERY CAREFULLY IN THIS EXTRAORDINARILY DANGEROUS SITUATION AND TALK FRANKLY TO THE U.S. BEFORE IT TOOK ANY DIRECT ACTION IN LEBANON.
LEWIS

SECRET

NNN

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERVENTION, TROOP DEPLOYMENT, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, MEETING REPORTS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, PEACE TALKS, NEGOTIATIONS, CAT-B
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TELAV10204
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P840137-1611
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780880/aaaacphm.tel
Line Count: 311
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f5d0ea65-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, EXDIS
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1787019
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LEBANON: DISCUSSION AUGUST 9 WITH BEGIN, YADIN, DAYAN AND WEIZMAN
TAGS: PBOR, MOPS, MILI, SY, LE, IS, (DAYAN, MOSHE), (BEGIN, MENACHEM), (WEIZMAN, EZER), (YADIN)
To: STATE SS MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f5d0ea65-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014